AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A scalable method of associating an annotation with a content source, the method comprising:

representing an annotation as an object having a plurality of properties wherein one of the plurality of properties is a document identifier property; ~~and~~

associating the annotation with a content source using the document identifier property wherein the document identifier property identifies the content source with which the annotation is associated~~, wherein:~~ and

storing the annotation ~~is retrievable from an~~ on at least an annotation server ~~in~~ of a multiple tier ~~computing~~ hierarchical annotation server system wherein each higher tier server includes more annotation information than lower tier servers.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the act of representing the annotation as an object having a plurality of properties further comprises defining generic properties of the annotation.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the generic properties are selected from the group consisting of: type, content, author name, creation time, modify time, time-to-live, document identifier, index and parent identifier.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the type property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a text file, a threaded message, an audio file, a video file, a calendar file, and a chat.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the act of representing the annotation as a object having a plurality of properties further comprises ~~define~~ defining one or more type specific properties unique to ~~the type property of~~ the annotation.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the document identifier is selected from the group consisting of: a filename, a directory path, and a uniform resource locator.

7. (Currently amended) A scalable method of presenting an annotation associated with a content source, the method comprising:

sending a document identifier for a content source to a tier I server, said tier I server being part of a multiple tier ~~computing~~ annotation server system that also includes a tier II server; and

receiving a first response from the tier I server, said first response comprising an indication of whether ~~one or more annotations are~~ an annotation is associated with the document identifier and, if an annotation is associated with the document identifier, a reference to said tier II server, said tier II server maintaining additional information ~~for each one of~~ regarding the ~~annotations~~ annotation associated with the document identifier.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying the first response in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying the first response in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 7, wherein said multiple tier ~~computing~~ annotation server system also includes a tier III server and further comprising:

sending a request to the tier II server for said additional information ~~for one of the annotations~~ regarding the annotation associated with the content source; and

receiving a second response from the tier II server, said second response comprising at least one ~~or more properties for~~ property of the annotation and a reference to said tier III server, said tier III server providing the annotation associated with the document identifier.

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11.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising displaying the at least one ~~or more properties for~~ property of the annotation in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

12.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising displaying the at least one ~~or more properties for~~ property of the annotation in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

13.   (Currently amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

sending to the tier III server an annotation identifier that identifies the annotation associated with the content source; and

receiving a third response from the tier III server, wherein the third response comprises a body for the annotation identified by the annotation identifier.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising displaying the body for the annotation identified by the annotation identifier in a manner that is non-intrusive to the content source.

15.   (Original) The method of claim 13, further comprising displaying the body for the annotation identified by the annotation identifier in a manner that is intrusive to the content source.

16.   (Currently amended) A computer readable medium comprising computer executable steps for executing a scalable method for associating an annotation with a content source, the method comprising:

representing an annotation as an object having a plurality of properties wherein one of the plurality of properties is a document identifier property; ~~and~~

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associating the annotation with a content source using the document identifier property, said document identifier property identifying the content source with which the annotation is associated~;~ and

storing said annotation ~being retrievable from an~ on at least one annotation server ~in~ of a multiple tier ~computing~ hierarchical annotation server system wherein each higher tier server includes more annotation information than lower tier servers.

17.   (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the plurality of properties are selected from the group consisting of: type, content, author name, creation time, modify time, time-to-live, document identifier, index, and parent identifier.

18.   (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the type property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a text file, a threaded message, an audio file, a video file, a calendar file, and a chat.

19.   (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 17, wherein the document identifier property of the annotation is selected from the group consisting of: a file name, a directory path, and a uniform resource locator.

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